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**ADVISE AI: Get ahead of the curve on AI innovation**
By Rob Burgess
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Over the past few years, artificial intelligence has affected almost every aspect of the wealth management industry.

For the second year, Financial Planning's ADVISE AI will bring together advisors and industry leaders for keynotes, panels and demonstrations focused on those shifts. The industry's first conference dedicated entirely to AI returns Oct. 28-29 at the Wynn Las Vegas.

Among the attendees will be Richard Chen, a legal advocate for advisors and the founder of New York-based Brightstar Law Group, who said he's eager to learn about the newest tools helping RIAs so he can share them with his clients.

On Oct. 29, Chen will join Beth Haddock, chief legal officer and head of compliance at AdvisorEngine, for a panel discussion on "AI & Compliance: Navigating the New Frontier," moderated by Brian Wallheimer, editor-in-chief of Financial Planning.

That's just one of several sessions going deep into how advisors are using AI in areas including document automation, behavioral finance, marketing and more.

**AI in document extraction, creation and analysis**
Participants are flying in from around the world for the conference, including Ian McKenna, director of the Finance & Technology Research Centre in London.

"I'm attending the show to see what is at the leading edge of advisor AI currently and particularly how fast things are moving," he said.

A few years ago, McKenna said he suggested that the "augmented economy" — by which he means the interaction of AI, robotics and humans — would accelerate as much each year as the "analog economy" used to in a generation. That prediction is looking increasingly accurate.

McKenna tracks advisor use of AI around the world and said that although there are some consistent elements across countries, there are also significant variations that others can learn from.

"Generally, advisor regulation is evolving very differently in the rest of the world than in the U.S.," he said. "American advisors are less constricted by explicit consumer protection regulations than their peers in many other countries."

On Oct. 29, McKenna will moderate a panel on "From PDFs to Planning: How AI

Is Transforming Document Extraction, Creation, and Analysis," featuring insights from Grant Blindbury, partner and key member of the management team at FMB Wealth Management in Thousand Oaks, California, and Erica Molina, vice president of product management at Cambridge Investment Research in Phoenix.

Getting advisors to change their behavior is difficult, McKenna said. But when a shift like AI comes along, advisors who want to survive in the business need to adapt, he said.

"AI has been a massive stimulus in this respect and enables firms to achieve far more consistency of process," he said. "This in turn can be a major catalyst in achieving change."

Over the past year, AI adoption has grown in several areas, including delivering the output of meetings, collecting client information from diverse sources and creating financial plans.

The most important trend is the amount of advisor time that can be liberated for more effective use, said McKenna.

"This is starting to add up with the advisors who are making most use of AI reporting that it's becoming a key driver to growing their businesses and serving more clients more profitably," he said.

"Perhaps most importantly," he said, "AI is liberating some advisors to spend far more client time doing what they like most — meeting with clients."

**AI in behavioral finance**

"Augmented humanity" will be the focus of the Oct. 28 session on "Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Advice," said Jason M. Pereira, partner and senior financial planner at Woodgate Financial in Toronto, who will lead the discussion with Brian Portnoy, founder of Chicago-based behavioral finance consultancy Shaping Wealth.

"The crux of it is our shared thesis that AI has the ability to make this industry more human by both reducing the time for advisors to research and deliver their services and supporting our development to become better, more empathetic human beings," he said.

Overall, Pereira has been closely watching the rapid development of "vibe coding" and the AI-powered software development platforms that allow people who have no coding abilities to build their own technology solutions.

"This technology has the potential to not only permit even solo RIAs to build their own solutions that fit their workflow but also to expedite the speed of new software development and existing software development," he said. "The Kitces map may be getting a lot bigger shortly."

As an ADVISE AI attendee, Pereira said he's looking forward to networking with others to see what the state of implementation of AI is with solo RIAs and enterprises.

"How have they modified their workflows and business processes to leverage AI and what productivity gains are they garnering from it?" he said. "We're almost three years into the generative AI world, so we should be beyond people just talking about its potential."

**AI in marketing**

Marie Swift, founder and CEO of Impact Communications in Leawood, Kansas, will lead an Oct. 29 discussion on "AI as Your Creative Partner: Crafting Compelling, Authentic Content That Converts," featuring panelists Trisha Qualy, managing partner of New York-based Affiliated Advisors, and Angela Giombetti, chief marketing officer of Wealthspire Advisors in New York City.

The session will "go beyond the hype and talk candidly about how wealth management firms are actually using AI today — what's working, what's risky and where the opportunities lie," Swift said.

"I've seen how AI can spark creativity and save time, but also how easily it can go off-brand or feel hollow," she said. "Our session will explore how advisors can embrace AI's promise while staying grounded in authenticity and client trust."

Swift said she will bring stories from her work with advisory firms experimenting with AI-driven graphics, video, written content and social media, "underscoring both the pitfalls and the promise."

Giombetti said she will share how Wealthspire Advisors has developed AI usage guidelines and content tracking to "prevent generic, soulless output and instead ensure every message reflects the firm's voice and brand standards," and Qualy said she will highlight how her network of advisors is embracing AI as a "creative partner," which is especially valuable for those who don't see themselves as "natural marketers," to produce content that is compliant as well as personalized and engaging.